

# The Unifier



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June 2023

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Happy June! This Sunday we will be celebrating our graduating seniors, acknowledging our Sunday School volunteers and commissioning our youth mission trip participants (who leave for Duluth in eleven days!). It will be a busy month!

Next month, we will be convening an **All-Church Retreat** on **July 15<sup>th</sup>**. I am praying that many (if not all) of you will participate. We are relying on our committee and commission members to be there, but even if you are not serving on one right now, be encouraged to come as well (and we will help you find one).

Why are we having an all-church retreat? Well, I am glad that you asked. I have four main intentions that I am planning and praying to accomplish at the all-church retreat.

First, when I arrived it was clear how tired and downtrodden everyone was because of the lingering effects of pandemic. However, while there has been a slow, gradual and clear procession beyond pandemic, I feel that we need to gather together and recommit to covenant fully to our life together as a congregation, post-pandemic.

Secondly, I have been here for eight months. In the last year there has been endless transition and a number of both adopted and proposed changes. It is an essential time to gather, pray and take stock of where we are and where God is calling us. Like any community or team, congregational flourishing requires taking time intentionally to clarify our vision, processes and roles in our life together.

Third, the very act of gathering together to review our hopes, roles and commitments is a act of prayer. In publicly gathering together, proclaiming who we are, who we hope to be and how we are going to get there is nothing less than an invitation to the Holy Spirit. We are naming our plans together, and inviting, **DARING EVEN**, the Holy Spirit to act through us to move us there. We will plan and talk, but we will also pray and worship; and it is my belief that God will meet us here and move amongst us.

We have also been blessed by a fourth providential goal on that day. As a part of our afternoon worship service, we will be celebrating Alisha Walker's Quinceanera. A daughter of this congregation will be celebrating her journey into young adulthood. There was a conversation about the suggested scheduling of the Quinceanera and the retreat on the same day; and I had a strong feeling that there was not a better way to gather for worship, on a day that we are clarifying who we are called by God to be, than to celebrate one of our young members into adulthood. Simply put, this is exactly why we are called to gather as United Protestant Church of Grayslake: to walk alongside one another in the light of God; encouraging one another to keep growing as disciples of Jesus.

Speaking of which, resurrection-minded discipleship will be our theme all summer. I pray that it will be a rich, relevant and life-giving time for us to listen to Jesus. I am praying that it may be a time of both rest and renewal for UPC as a congregation. I am grateful for this community and looking forward to the summer and next fall together.

In Christ,

*Pastor Jason*

**SAVE THE DATE: All-Church Retreat at UPC on July 15th, 9 AM - 4 PM  
ALL ARE WELCOME. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Dear Church Family,

This month, I wanted to take an opportunity to recognize our graduating Senior High School Class of 2023.



Milla Kutsin will be graduating from Grayslake Central High School. She will be attending the University of Illinois in the fall, majoring in Advertising with a minor in Art & Design.



Sam Cooper will be graduating from Grayslake Central High School. He will be attending the University of Tennessee in the fall, majoring in Sport Management.



Adam Divis will be graduating from Warren Township High School. He will be attending the College of Lake County in the fall to study Fire Science.



Congratulations Milla, Sam, Adam, and their families for all your hard work! As your church family, we want you to know that we continue to pray for you throughout all your life's journeys. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Blessings,

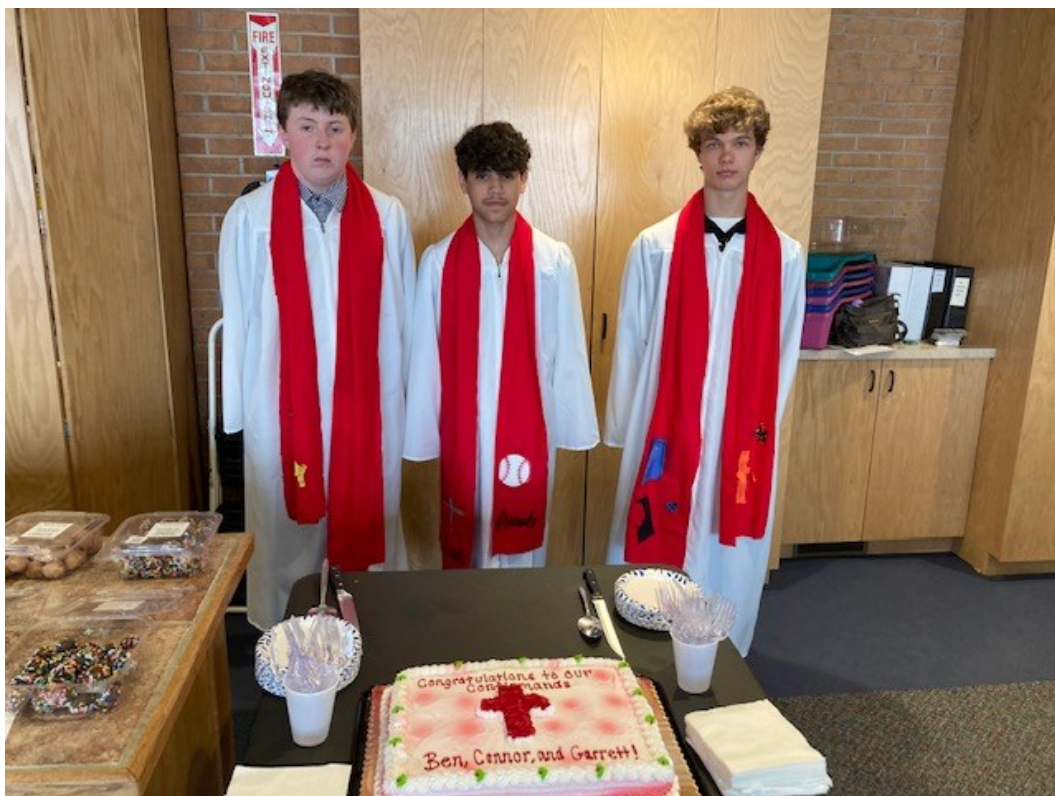
*Ryan Aubrey*  
*Director of Christian Education*



**UPC welcomed the 2023 Confirmation Class on Sunday, May 7th.**



**Pictured above: Ryan Aubrey, Ben Ansell, Connor Bethmann, Garrett Fries, Rev. Jason Okrzynski**



**Congratulations to Ben, Connor and Garrett!**

# Music Sunday

Our UPC musicians were recognized on Sunday, May 21st during the worship service. We appreciate all of those listed below who have enhanced our services with their talents, dedication, and hard work.

## Chamber/Chancel Choir

Emily Aubrey  
Ryan Aubrey  
Laurie Bethmann  
Rick Burg  
Lexie Craig  
Spencer Craig  
Sean DelGrosso  
Jay Eldridge  
Barb Fischel  
Denise Fuller  
Ruth Gheysen  
Jackie Ianson  
Jan Kendrick  
Mary Ann McDowell  
Katie Merrill  
Kay Sutton  
Marcia Twadell



## Grace Notes Bell Choir

Deb Baker-Janis  
Cinda Bartz  
Sean DelGrosso  
Wende Fry  
Ruth Gheysen  
Jackie Ianson  
Jan Kendrick  
Abby Madden  
Mary Ann McDowell  
Katie Merrill  
Sue Schmidt  
Kay Sutton  
Karen Thoms  
Dian Weinkauff  
Jerry Wessale  
Ryan Aubrey, Percussion  
Rick Burg, Percussion  
Lou Thoms, Trumpet



Of course there was cake!

# STEWARDSHIP NEWS

Introducing the *Above and Beyond Fund*



The *Above and Beyond Fund* is a fund which will hold donations from donors who wish to make contributions **in addition to** honoring their regular pledges, intended specifically to cover the deficit (~\$82,500) anticipated by the 2023 regular UPC budget.

This fund was initiated by 2 benevolent, anonymous members who are committed to donating \$10,000 each to the *Above and Beyond Fund* this year. If you are moved by their generosity and are willing to make your own donation of any amount to this fund, you are asked to submit a check, separate from your annual pledge, in the offering plate (or by mail) with *Above and Beyond* written in the memo section so that Jan Kendrick, our Financial Secretary, can record regular pledges separate from the *Above and Beyond Fund*.

The Stewardship Committee will soon display a large poster (thermometer) in the church to show the fund's progress.

This fund is managed by the Budget & Finance and Stewardship Committees. We thank you for your generosity and support on behalf of the United Protestant Church.

Trusting the God who provides,

Carol Roselli-Rasmussen  
Stewardship Committee Chair

## STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONIAL

Presented during worship on May 14, 2023 by Dale Message

**I would describe my life-long search and experience with organized religion as what does it mean to Love your neighbor and Who is your neighbor?**

**Somewhere between the late fall of 1994 or the start of 1995, I and my son Christopher started attending United Protestant Church and sometime later joined the church.**

**While my son Christopher attended Sunday School prior to the church service, I would sit in my vehicle and read the newspaper. I would assist in the classroom monthly as requested by the Christian Education Staff. Once Matthew was in first grade, I started to bring Chris and Matthew to Sunday School and Church Services.**

**I became aware I needed to attend Adult Education both as a proper example for my sons and to reengage with the study of the Bible (back when I was assigned to San Antonio, there was a small group of young adults and young adult education).**

**I recall when Adult Education would offer two topical studies to choose from during the Sunday education hour and sometimes it was difficult to choose between the two. Through the studies and topical videos series, I started to really understand what it meant to claim to be a Christian.**

**I committed to my son's completing confirmation, so we started to attend the 8:15 am service so Chris could attend confirmation along with the confirmation service requirements and this allowed Chris to make his Sunday football games.**

**My first opportunity to service United Protestant Church did not go well. When asked to serve, I was never told when the committee met and unfortunately, I had a Scouting commitment the same day of the week the committee met. Later, I was asked to serve on the Stewardship Committee and later accepted the chair of the committee. Next, I was asked to serve on the Budget & Finance Committee and later served as the chair.**

**When the message was made to the congregation the need for a delegate to United Methodist Annual Conference, I volunteered and was accepted. I attended that first annual conference in June; the theme was "Who is your neighbor?" At the conference I purchased my first study Bible and a devotion for daily reading of the Scripture along with commentary. At the conference, I also became more aware my neighbors are those I do not see every day and I realized the multi culture of the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church. Each and every conference was a deeper understanding of who is my neighbor and how to be a disciple and to make others disciples of Jesus Christ.**

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## **STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONIAL (continued)**

**During the Adult Education classes, I heard the testimonies of those that participated in the Disciple Bible Study. I did not hesitate when Disciple was offered by Steve Bulmer. Disciple Bible Study changed my Christian life. The deep study into the Scriptures, the daily readings and the discussion with the group was transformative. I was so into my daily devotional readings, that I continued them along with the necessary daily Disciple readings. Unfortunately, due to the scheduling of the second offering of Disciple, I could not participate, but participated in the third offering of Disciple. As the title of the course states, I learned and understood what it meant to be a disciple of Jesus. I truly wish someone would have influenced me as a young adult to participate in Disciple Bible Study. I know I would be a better husband and father had I experienced Disciple sooner.**

**I learned of opportunities to attend local courses offered by the UMC Annual Conference about radical hospitality, church leadership, organization of church leadership, discernment of the local area where the congregation is located and what are possible mission opportunities.**

**I participated in Adult mission trips to Seager Brown, LA; Red Bird Mission, KY; and Detroit, MI.**

**I also help with the PADS and Feed My Starving Children missions offered by the United Protestant Church.**

**I was asked and accepted to serve as a Member-at-Large on Administrative Council.**

**I was asked and accepted the Moderator/Lay Leader and thus the chair of the Staff Parish Committee.**

**During the pandemic, I connected with the United Church of Christ Zoom sessions both national and with the Illinois Conference. These sessions brought more fellowship with diverse individuals to build on what it means to be a disciple of Christ and to be a disciple to others I come in contact with.**

**I accepted the ask to chair the Administrative Council, my current leadership for United Protestant Church.**

**The Small Group I was associated with offered the necessity of gathering in a group to discuss and share together.**

**The Men's gathering on Wednesday mornings is important as the group membership includes other men attending other houses of worship and offers the diversity of being a man of Christ.**

**Through my participation in the education opportunities at United Protestant Church and the opportunities United Protestant Church has allowed me to participate in the classes and courses offered through the United Methodist Northern Illinois Annual Conference and the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, I have learned what it means to be a disciple of Christ and who are my neighbors that Christ and God wants me to love as much as I love God and Christ.**

# MISSIONS

## June Joy Sharing — 2023 Adult Mission Trip to Mayfield, KY

We had a very rewarding trip this year to the tornado torn city of Mayfield, KY. We went there last year as well. They will need at least 5 years to recover from the December 2021 F4 tornado that ripped through their downtown. The funnel was 1 mile in diameter at that point. Our team of 10 spent much time at Rickie's house. Seven of his family members huddled in their tub with another 2 also occupying the bathroom during the storm. Two days later he and a friend replaced the roof on his garage so family members that lost their homes would have someplace dry to store their belongings. We had the privilege of replacing siding on the garage as well as installing soffit and fascia to its roof. Rickie was at the house while we worked. He is a very resilient person with a tremendous attitude! He is disabled but has been raising his grandson for a number of years and is a pillar for his family in general. His house lost one porch corner post. His house was at the edge of the funnel as it passed through town. The next house lost its porch. The second house past his is now the last home as you go into the downtown. All others were destroyed. Various groups are building new homes but it will take years to bring Mayfield back to what it once was.



Before and after the soffit and fascia install.



Wende Fry cutting siding and the final piece going up!



Looking downtown from Rickie's street.

*(continued on the next page)*



## 2023 Adult Mission Trip to Mayfield, KY (continued)



Rickie's house was one of 5 work sites where we completed repair projects. Multiple groups are building low-cost homes so that residents can return. The group we worked with is focusing on rebuilding homes that were damaged but repairable. The people of Mayfield want to stay in their city!

Grain storage bin roof in tree 1 mile from its home  
In the distance. This is 200 feet from Rickie's house.



Here is our happy team at the end of our trip.  
L-R: Dave Marcure, Terri Hanner, Virgie Anthony,  
Phyllis and Chuck Martin, Rick Burg, Mike Anthony,  
Al Sommer, Wende Fry, Rev. Greg Denk.

## Soles For Jesus Shoe Drive

A sincere THANK YOU to those who participated in UPC's shoe drive to benefit the May Joy Sharing Soles for Jesus! Because of you, 241 pairs of shoes will go to Africa to be given to those who have no shoes. And remember that you can donate shoes **THROUGHOUT THE YEAR** at UPC in the collection bin in the narthex. Any size, any condition, and even single shoes can be donated. Because of you, people in Africa will not only receive these shoes, they will also learn of the love of Jesus for them! Also please understand that Soles for Jesus must pay \$12,000 monthly to ship shoes to Africa, so monetary donations are needed as well. Thank you so much!

## Feed My Starving Children

The next UPC packing session at Feed My Starving Children in Libertyville is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 6** from **7:00-8:45 p.m.** Please contact Cinda Bartz at [bartzc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bartzc@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested in participating.

## UPC Shopper

Father's Day is June 18th. Not sure what to get dad for Father's Day? Why not give him a gift card and let him pick out something special. Want to make it more personal? Buy a gift card and use it to purchase his present.

We have gift cards for a variety of restaurants and can order many others. Plain or fancy, expensive or inexpensive. Taco Bell to Lou Malnati's Pizza to Maggiano's to Ruth's Chris Steakhouse. Just ask Dian if you need help. If we don't have what you are looking for in stock, ask Dian to order it for you.

This year the profits from the UPC Shopper will be going to help pay the shipping for our Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes. We hope to ship 200 boxes which would amount to \$2,000 in shipping fees and a lot of very happy children. If you love OCC, please consider purchasing gift cards to help support the cause.

## Operation Christmas Child

The featured OCC item for June is new balls and pumps. We hope to put some kind of ball in each of the 200 OCC boxes we pack.



***To all of the  
Dads at UPC  
and within our  
community:***



Join us for VBS at UPC!



# Babylon

Daniel's Courage in Captivity™

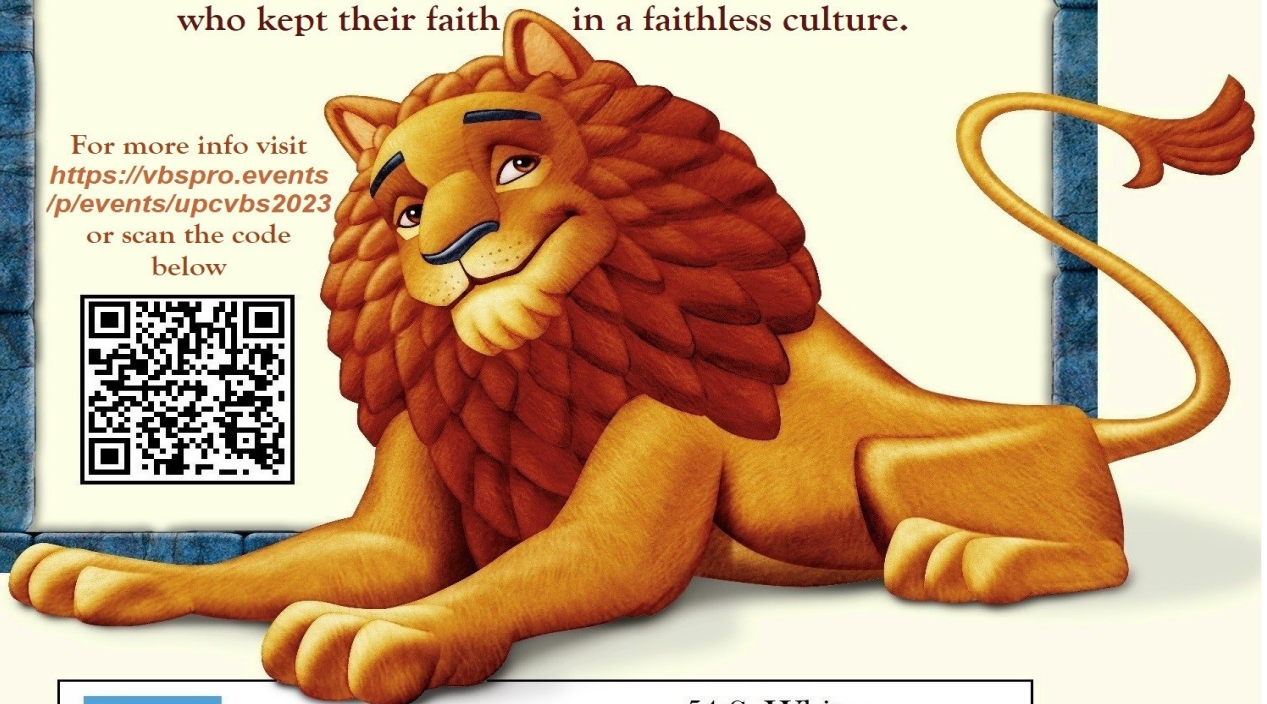
June 19th – 22nd  
10am-12pm

*\$15 Per Child;*

*\$35 For 3 Or More Children*

Join Daniel—torn from his home and forced into the king's service. Explore exotic sights and smells in a Babylonian bazaar! Kids and adults will find that they're not much different from Daniel and his friends, who kept their faith in a faithless culture.

For more info visit  
<https://vbspro.events/p/events/upcvbs2023>  
or scan the code  
below



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Protestant  
Church  
of Grayslake**

54 S. Whitney

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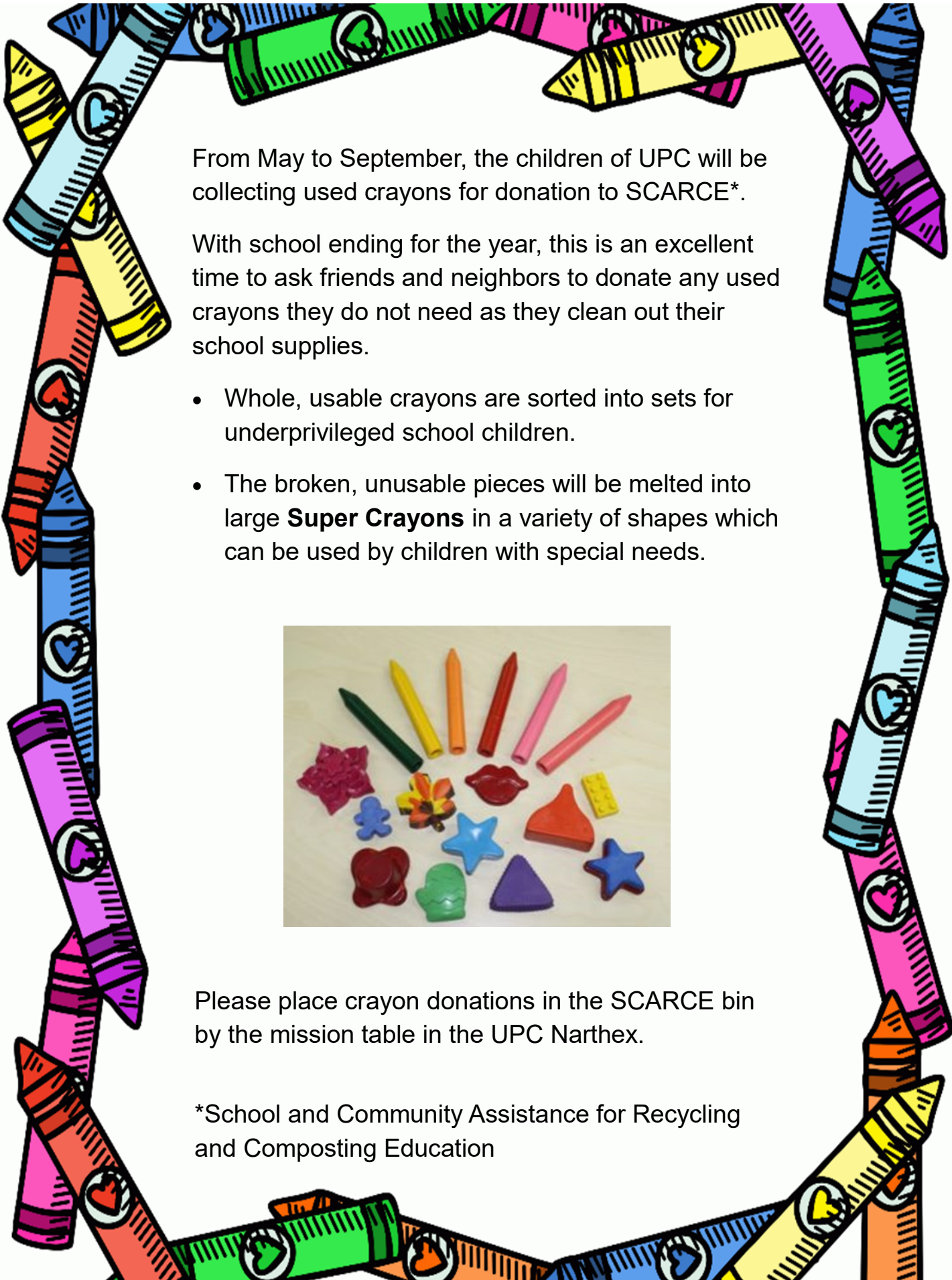
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DCE - [ryanaubrey@upcgl.org](mailto:ryanaubrey@upcgl.org)

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From May to September, the children of UPC will be collecting used crayons for donation to SCARCE\*.

With school ending for the year, this is an excellent time to ask friends and neighbors to donate any used crayons they do not need as they clean out their school supplies.

- Whole, usable crayons are sorted into sets for underprivileged school children.
- The broken, unusable pieces will be melted into large **Super Crayons** in a variety of shapes which can be used by children with special needs.



Please place crayon donations in the SCARCE bin by the mission table in the UPC Narthex.

\*School and Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education



## **2023 SLEEPOUT FOR SHELTER A SUCCESS!!**

**PADS Lake County Goal: \$15,000 RECEIVED: OVER \$25,000**

**UPC TEAM TOP FUNDRAISERS!!! RAISED: OVER \$2,500**

**Thanks to all who prayed for the 2023 SleepOut for Shelter to be a fundraising success!! Your prayers were answered in a BIG WAY!! Thanks to all who donated and to those who participated in person at UPC or in other places in the county. A few photos from our UPC PADS Team's overnight:**



## **END OF SEASON VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENTS**

**UPC PADS VOLUNTEERS at St. Mary of Vernon Volunteer Appreciation Event:**



**UPC PADS VOLUNTEERS at PADS Lake County Volunteer Appreciation Event:**



**Thanks to these and all our volunteers and supporters for making it possible for us and PADS Lake County to serve those experiencing a housing crisis in Lake County!**

**--The UPC PADS Site Leadership Team**



**WCF NEWS — JUNE 2023**  
**WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**  
**WCF WELCOMES ALL WOMEN 18 & OVER!!**  
**See the chart below to find which day & time**  
**work for you!**

**SUMMER PLANS FOR WCF CIRCLES:**

**Circle 2** meets one Sunday a month throughout the summer at 11:30 AM in the Meeting Room after visiting with others in the congregation following worship. **Summer dates are June 4, July 30, and August 20.** VISITORS ARE WELCOME!!

**Circle 4/5** does not meet regularly during the summer months, but will meet at 11:30 AM on June 7 at Culver's in Grayslake, and will try to get together for lunch sometime in July and August as well. Contact Sue Schmidt for more details.

**Circle 9** meets year-round at 5:30 PM on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Hillside Restaurant on Rt. 83 in Grayslake. VISITORS ARE WELCOME! Occasionally, members have other commitments which causes the meeting to be cancelled, so visitors should check with Ruth Gheysen or one of the Circle 9 members prior to going to Hillside.

**Circle 10** does not meet in person on a regular basis, but members are in contact with each other on Facebook. Contact Jasmine Walker for more information.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Watch for more detailed information regarding changes for circles in the Tuesday Newsday emails, weekly church bulletins & our monthly UNIFIER articles. To contact chairpersons: See the church directory or contact Rose Pech at 847-682-2837 or email [rose4nonna@hotmail.com](mailto:rose4nonna@hotmail.com).

Circle	Day/Date	Time	Place	Contact
2	Sun., June 4	11:30 AM	UPC Meeting Room	Catherine Vick
4/5	Wed., June 7	11:30 AM	Culver's in Grayslake	Sue Schmidt
9	Tues., June 13	5:30 PM	Hillside Restaurant	Ruth Gheysen
10	TBD	TBD	TBD	Jasmine Walker

**WCF MISSION FUND:** Tyler, Brittany, & Danielle are in the U.S. and expect their new baby very soon. They need prayers for their accommodations while here in the States and for all to go well in West Africa in their absence. A reminder that they need a monthly income of \$2,000 to meet their budget. We encourage those who can donate now and anytime during 2023 to do so by either going online to [www.ilad.ngo/D2002](http://www.ilad.ngo/D2002) or by paper check payable to ILAD with D2002 written in the memo. Mail checks to ILAD, Atten: D2002, P.O. Box 383153, Duncanville, TX 75138-3183. Donations for 2024 can be made with checks payable to UPC with "WCF Mission Fund" in the memo or by cash in an envelope marked WCF Mission Fund.

--Blessings, Rose Pech

## June Birthdays

6/8 Ben Ansell  
6/9 Barb Fischel  
6/9 Andrew Schmidt  
6/10 Cami Adams  
6/12 Elizabeth Madden  
6/15 Charlie Craig  
6/16 Rosanne Taylor  
6/18 Jason Okrzynski  
6/19 Denise Fuller  
6/19 Lori Rische  
6/23 Spencer Craig  
6/23 Gavin Fries  
6/23 Roger Richardson  
6/23 Diane Trowitch  
6/26 Patricia Barker  
6/30 Cathy Vick

## June Anniversaries

6/11 William & Marie Weller  
6/21 Gretchen & Jerome Jagla  
6/30 Jeff & Monique Taylor



### UPC's Continued Prayers for Members, Relatives, and Friends:

**Members:** Bill Churchill, Marie Frandsen, the Fuller family, Susan Green, Joan Hendricks, David Holliman, Joanne Lawrence, Marjorie Miller, Pat Wackerlin, Dan Watkins, Bobbie Weichman, and Dian Weinkauf.

**Tyler, Brittany & Danielle** – request prayers as they are back in the U.S. to have their new baby, and prepare to return to West Africa as a family of 4. They always ask that we pray for them to have the same peace that Paul had in Philippians 4:11-13 regardless of their circumstances.

**Relatives & Friends:** Allen Anglin, Kathy Behm, Joe Boccaleoni, Kathy Weichman Bradley, Megan Brown, Lorine Cooper, Patricia Davis, Judy Hendrickson, Mary Mason, Gloria Meier, Tommy Nellessen, Gary Sadlack, Leslie Stahl, Stephan, Erik and Kacie Stanley, their son and Erik's mother, Diane.

**Long-term prayers:** Bruce Baird, Flora Boehm & family, Betty Bournes, Thomas Bournes, Mary Brase, Don & Tina Busch, Brad Fuller, Trish Jelinek, Rick Juern, Ben Kelly-Fuller, Sue (PADS friend), Wendy (friend of Rose Pech), and Michelle (friend of Linda Markham).

**LOVING GOD,**



**HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

To Access UPC's Calendar On  
Line

[http://  
www.mychurchevents.com/  
calendar/calendar.aspx?  
ci=L6F0H2O9G1F0O9L6I3](http://www.mychurchevents.com/calendar/calendar.aspx?ci=L6F0H2O9G1F0O9L6I3)

## Contact Us

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Church Office Hours:  
Tuesday & Thursday  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Grounded | Empowered | Transformed

United Protestant Church of Grayslake  
54 S. Whitney Street  
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